



Tennessee Professional Assistance Program Monitoring Guide

Mission

The mission of the Tennessee Professional Assistance Program is to assist in the rehabilitation of impaired health care professionals by providing consultation, referral, and monitoring services to facilitate a safe return to practice.

Introduction

The *TnPAP Monitoring Guide* was developed to assist you in understanding the various requirements of your participation in this state-legislated program. It is vital that you read and understand this guide as well as the *Affinity ehealth Participant User Guide* in their entirety before signing the Monitoring Agreement. In addition to discussing stipulations contained within the Monitoring Agreement, the *TnPAP Monitoring Guide* provides you with an overview of the Agreement and reports needed during the monitoring period.

Helpful tips are offered throughout this Guide. Here are your first three tips:

Tip: Immediately start a notebook or file folder to organize all your TnPAP materials (Monitoring Agreement, forms, letters, etc).

Tip: Always keep a copy of any document faxed, emailed, or mailed to TnPAP along with a notation of the date sent.

Tip: Whenever you have questions about your Monitoring Agreement write them down and then contact your TnPAP case manager if you cannot locate the answer within the various guides provided at the TnPAP or Affinity ehealth websites and/or your Monitoring Agreement.

Hint: Important website addresses: www.tnpap.org and <https://affinityehealth.com>.

Hours of Operation

TnPAP office hours are 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., central time, Monday - Friday, except major holidays.

Incoming and Outgoing Telephone Communication

- We encourage you to communicate with your case manager via the Affinity ehealth online message system. This feature is available at your AOS home page. This eliminates “telephone tag” for you and the case manager.
- **If your case manager leaves a “return call message” for you, it is vital that you return the call on the day received or the next business day.**
- Due to the volume of calls TnPAP receives daily, it may be necessary for you to leave a “return call request” when calling your case manager. Our voice mail system is confidential, and your case manager will do his/her best to return your call on the day received.
- Leaving a detailed voice mail message will ensure that the case manager can provide an accurate response to your questions.
- Calls will be returned in the order in which they are received.
- Remember, your case manager is monitoring numerous practitioners. and you may need to occasionally seek assistance from an available case manager.
- Most routine questions can be answered by referring to this manual, the Monitoring Agreement or the Affinity e-health Participant User Guide. Please check these guides prior to calling your case manager.
- If you are experiencing any type of problem with the toxicology screening program, call Affinity Online Solutions (AOS) at 1-877-267-4305. Due to the volume of calls your call will be returned in the order in which it was received. The AOS phone system automatically records the date and time the call is received along with your message.

Tip: It is your responsibility to personally speak to your case manager monthly for the purpose of discussing your progress and monitoring compliance, or whenever you have questions

about any aspect of the Monitoring Agreement that may not be addressed within this guide.

Staff Directory

Name	Title	Phone	Email
Steve Allen	Case Manager	615-250-6103	steve@tnpap.org
Marcia Bradley	Case Manager	615-250-6105	marcia@tnpap.org
Linda O'Brien	Case Manager	615-250-6109	linda@tnpap.org
Richard Whitt	Case Manager	615-250-6108	richard@tnpap.org
Mike Harkreader	Executive Director	615-250-6111	mike@tnpap.org
Elaine Eaton	Administrative Director	615-250-6106	elaine@tnpap.org
Jeanie Brown	Sr. Adm. Assistant	615-250-6104	jeanie@tnpap.org
Robin Alexander	Receptionist	615-726-4001	robin@tnpap.org

Emergency Contact

- Usually, events surrounding monitoring are not considered an emergency. If an event occurs after normal business hours, on weekends, or on holidays, that needs to be communicated to the case manager, please leave a voice mail message for him/her (see above staff directory).
- For emergency situations after business hours, contact your local alcohol and drug treatment program, crisis intervention, or emergency room for immediate assistance, or call 911.
- An issue with missed check-in is not considered an emergency. Contact your case manager when the office reopens.

Story of How I Got To TnPAP

To assist in your monitoring, we need background information on how you got to TnPAP and if applicable, your chemical use history. This information is completed online at <https://www.affinityhealth.com>.

Monitoring Agreement

The Monitoring Agreement is a contractual agreement between you and TnPAP. The purpose of the Agreement is to describe the specific conditions of your monitoring.

- You must comply with all terms and conditions of the Monitoring Agreement.
- You are required to provide a copy of the Monitoring Agreement to your employer, group facilitator and therapist.
- You must ensure that your primary care physician or designee, pharmacist and dentist are aware of the agreement.

The term of monitoring may vary, depending upon the individual criteria as determined by your evaluation, treatment team and TnPAP. Generally, the Monitoring Agreement duration is 36 months except for advance practice providers which is 60 months. Second and subsequent Monitoring Agreements are usually 60 months in duration. *Noncompliance with the Monitoring Agreement requirements may lengthen the duration of the Agreement.*

Tip: Refer to your Monitoring Agreement often. If you have questions about any of the specific stipulations contained within your Monitoring Agreement, call your case manager.

Exchange of Information (aka Release of Information)

The exchange of information is a mandatory component of your monitoring program. TnPAP staff needs to communicate with all individuals who are supporting your recovery and your practice.

These individuals include, but may not be limited to, therapist, work supervisor, primary care physician (or designee), pharmacist, dentist, and group facilitator. Some of the exchange of information (such as the Tennessee Department of Health) will not be used unless you become noncompliant with the terms of your Monitoring Agreement or if you were referred to TnPAP via a licensing board. You will be required to sign a new exchange of information if the individuals involved in supporting your recovery and practice change during the term of the Agreement. If you refuse to sign consent forms you may not be eligible for participation or you will be dismissed from the program.

Tip: Check with your case manager frequently to ensure that an Exchange of Information form is on file for all your healthcare providers and employer.

Mood Altering and Controlled Substances

- TnPAP is an abstinence based program. Abstinence is defined as refraining from the use of any mood-altering substance.
 - Mood altering substances are defined as any substance, legal or illegal, which may be taken with the intended or unintended outcome of altering your mood. Controlled substances are defined as those substances managed under the Controlled Substance Act (Schedule 1 through Section V). Not all mood altering substances may be considered controlled substances, though all controlled substances are considered mood altering.
 - Alcohol in any amount is considered a mood altering substance.
- This means no use of any alcohol, narcotics, opioids, benzodiazepines, and/or any illicit drugs (i.e., marijuana, methamphetamines, ecstasy, crack, hallucinogens, etc). You will also need to refrain from the use of any over the counter (OTC) medications which contain phenylephrine, ephedrine, alcohol, or Benadryl compounds. (Always make sure you read the labels of any medication or supplement you use. When in doubt check with the pharmacist. There is also a Medication Guide at www.tnpap.org that may be utilized. Bottom line... **you are responsible for any substance you ingest and must know the ingredients that are prohibited while under TnPAP monitoring.**
- An initial and continuing requirement of your Monitoring Agreement is to inform us of all your prescribed medications as well as all over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements that you take. Some over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbs may affect the results of your drug screens, as will some food and beverage supplements. **Be aware of what you are ingesting at all times!**

Treatment of Pain

- Chronic pain can be significant issue for anyone. Pain in an individual with a chemical impairment diagnosis requires special considerations. If you have a chronic pain issue, TnPAP will require that you seek consultation and recommendations from an ASAM certified pain management provider. The cost of this consultation is your responsibility.
- It is essential that you inform TnPAP immediately of any potential situations where you may be prescribed a mood altering substance (i.e., dental surgery, ER treatment, etc.). The treatment provider must provide TnPAP with a copy of the prescription and a Verification of Prescribed Medication report (www.tnpap.org) and a release of information for the practitioner. **You must refrain from working while taking any mood-altering substances until a negative UDS specimen is obtained via Affinity Online Solutions.**

Tip: Do not consume any medication, unless it is an emergency situation, without first providing TnPAP with a Verification of Prescribed Medication report. Always follow-up with a telephone call to your case manager to ensure the report was received.

Tip: If a medication makes you feel different, it could be mood altering. Avoid it! If you don't know what is in a prescribed drug, ask your doctor or pharmacist. Ask before you take it, not after!

Tip: A positive toxicology screen result that is not supported with a Verification of Prescribed Medication report pre-filed with TnPAP may result in an amendment to the Agreement extending the monitoring time period.

Employment

Depending upon your individual circumstances, certain conditions may be placed upon your return to employment. These conditions may include your total hours of work per week, the shifts you work, restriction of access to narcotics, and work setting. The conditions under which you may work were developed by TnPAP based on its experience with many healthcare practitioners in recovery. These conditions are intended to support your recovery as well as promote your patients' safety.

First, before you begin looking for work, do the following:

- Contact your TnPAP case manager to ensure that you have initial approval to seek work as a healthcare practitioner.
- If requested by TnPAP, you may need to request that your therapist or treatment provider complete a return to work assessment and provide to TnPAP.

Second, after receiving verbal approval to seek employment from your TnPAP case manager:

- When you interview, make sure you talk with your prospective employer about your involvement with TnPAP.
- If you are offered a position, immediately call TnPAP and provide us with the name of the person you interviewed with and/or the person who will be your work supervisor. You will need to provide us with a release of information form for this person (www.tnpap.org). Your case manager will contact this person to obtain further information about your prospective job.

Third, the following documents must be in the TnPAP office before the case manager will consider completing a Return to Practice Authorization for you.

- Discharge summary from treatment facility, if applicable.
- Personal letter discussing disease procession that includes a list of relapse warning signs, symptoms, and triggers.
- Recent negative drug screen (within last 10 days).
- Monitoring Agreement completed in its entirety and signed by you.
- TnPAP Exchange of Information form for employer.
- TnPAP Exchange of Information form for therapy provider and documentation of attendance to at least one therapy/counseling session, if applicable.
- Name of support group facilitator, TnPAP Exchange of Information form and verification of attendance at least one meeting.
- AOS registration.

Once the above documents have been received and the case manager has spoken to the employer, TnPAP will provide the employer with a Return to Practice Authorization. After the employer receives and acknowledges receipt of the Return to Practice Authorization, you may return to work in the approved position.

Tip: Beginning orientation or working prior to authorization being granted is considered a serious violation of your Monitoring Agreement requirements and will result in an extension of the monitoring period or discharge from the program.

Change(s) in Employment

If you anticipate or wish to change any of the conditions of your work, you must first obtain permission from TnPAP. This applies to changes in hours, shifts worked, your identified work supervisor, or your place of employment.

It is imperative to remember that you must seek TnPAP pre-approval of any return to employment, changes in employment, or changes in working conditions.

Tip: You are required to inform your prospective employers and employers that you are a TnPAP participant.

Tip: You are required to provide your employer with a copy of the Monitoring Agreement as well as any subsequent amendments. These documents will provide information about current practice stipulations.

Tip: Establishing boundaries are essential in recovery, therefore, employment is not to interfere with the Monitoring Agreement requirements including meeting attendance, counseling appointments, etc.

Tip: Your case manager will be very helpful in supporting you in understanding the return to practice process or the rationale for certain monitoring restrictions. Call us!

Multi-state Licensure

Some individuals have the privilege to practice in all states which have adopted and implemented the compact licensure procedure. However, boards may limit a practitioner to a single state license, therefore (s)he does not have the privilege to practice nursing in any state other than the "home state." An individual being monitored by TnPAP is not permitted to practice in a state other than Tennessee.

Reports to TnPAP

- Participants are required to submit a quarterly self report and meeting attendance report on online via <https://www.affinityehealth.com>.
- You are responsible for ensuring that all other reports required by your Monitoring Agreement (including employer evaluations and progress reports) are provided to TnPAP on time. Forms may be downloaded at www.tnpap.org.
- Repeatedly submission of late reports may result in an extension of the Monitoring Agreement time period.

Tip: Put your first and last name, SSN and case manager's name on all reports that you submit.

Tip: Make copies of all reports you send to TnPAP. This will provide you with back-up copies if mail loss occurs or if the fax machine malfunctions. Keep the copies in your folder or notebook.

Tip: Check periodically with your case manager to ensure all your reports are current.

Tip: Ask your employer, therapist, counselor, etc. to send you a copy of their TnPAP report so you can ensure it has been sent.

Toxicology Screening

Randomized toxicology screens required for most TnPAP participants to deter the use of alcohol, mood-altering or controlled substances. As you establish a pattern of compliance with your monitoring requirements, you become eligible to request a decrease in your drug testing frequency. However, noncompliance patterns including failure to submit reports in a timely manner, missed check-in calls, and irregular toxicology reports, may result in an increase in your drug test frequency.

Even though urine drug screens are the standard test utilized, TnPAP may request other types of toxicology screening, e.g., blood, hair, etc).

- Tip: You are accountable for your own recovery. When you “check in” each day (365 days annually) to determine if you need to provide a specimen, you reinforce your responsibility. Hours are posted on the Affinity Online Solutions (AOS) home page.
- Tip: Check in and provide the specimen early in the morning.
- Tip: Refrain from drinking excessive amounts of fluids before you provide the specimen (restrict fluid intake to 8-16 oz. four hours prior to testing).
- Tip: AOS records the exact time when you check in.
- Tip: Leaving a voice mail or sending an e-mail to your case manager does not excuse a screen.
- Tip: AOS customer service representative cannot excuse a screen selection.
- Tip: Complete the chain-of-custody form in its entirety. Failure to do so may result in a “no show” report or require a retest (at your expense).

- Tip: The ingestion of poppy seeds, “second hand” marijuana smoke, cooking with alcohol, or using over the counter products containing alcohol is not an excuse for a positive result on a toxicology screen. If this occurs, it will be considered a positive UDS result.

Affinity Online Solutions (AOS) manages the randomization of your drug testing frequency. Some individuals may require additional screens, at an additional charge. If this is the case the specifics will be discussed with you individually by a TnPAP case manager. If you are having drug screens done routinely by the court system (drug diversion), TnPAP will do what we can to use those as supplemental tests in order to decrease the number of TnPAP screens and lower the costs to you.

- Tip: Reading the *Affinity ehealth Participant User Guide* will make the registration process easier for you. The guide is located at <https://www.affinityehealth.com>.
- Tip: It is your responsibility to maintain sufficient amount money in your AOS account, at all times, for toxicology screening. The lack of funds will not be considered as a legible reason for not providing a specimen when selected to do so.
- Tip: Be aware that toxicology screen frequency is determined on a yearly, not monthly basis. Therefore, the number of tests will vary each month.

Abnormal or Positive Drug Screen Results

A sequence of events will occur whenever we receive a non-negative or abnormal drug screen result from a specimen you provided for testing.

- **Abnormal Specimen**
A urine drug screen may be considered abnormal if the result is dilute, adulterated, invalid, outside normal temperature range, or is a substituted specimen. The first time an abnormal specimen is received, you will be given directions to assist you in routinely providing concentrated drug screening specimens. Refraining from drinking excessive fluids will help to concentrate your urine. If your drug screening specimens continue to be dilute, they will be considered as a positive drug screen result and you may be directed to make an appointment for a re-evaluation or with a nephrologist.

- **Positive Specimen**
If a positive drug screen result is received, we will call you. We will identify the date of the specimen and will ask you for the reason your drug screen was positive. Depending upon the reason for the positive drug screen, the TnPAP case manager will determine best course of action such as re-evaluation of your recovery status or we may direct you to discuss the positive screen with your therapist, etc. If you are working in a health care setting, we will inform your supervisor of the positive screen and may recommend that you stop working. The TnPAP monitoring team will discuss information received from your supervisor, the evaluator, therapist, etc. and present you with further recommendations.

- Tip: If you have a positive toxicology screen you may be required to immediately cease practice until a negative result is obtained.

- Tip: A positive toxicology result not supported by a Verification of Prescribed Medication report will be considered a violation of the Monitoring Agreement.
- Tip: You are responsible for any/all cost of re-testing a specimen.

- **Adulterated and Substituted Specimen**
All adulterated and substituted drug screen specimens will be considered positive and will be handled as described above for a positive drug screen.

Tip: Any attempt to alter a drug screen may result in immediate discharge from TnPAP and a report made to your licensure board.

Tip: Do not miss a drug screen! If an emergency prevents you from providing a specimen on a required day, call us immediately! If it is after normal business hours or on a holiday, leave a message in your case manager's mailbox and he or she will contact you when the office reopens (see Staff Directory within this document).

Going Out of Town, Vacations, Illness

We will not excuse testing for any reason other than documented medical illness that would preclude you from screening (i.e. hospitalization or absolute bed rest). If you plan to travel you will need to make arrangements beforehand to test. AOS offers access to testing sites throughout the continental US on their website.

Relapse

Relapses are to be reported to TnPAP immediately. You and your case manager will discuss what action is necessary to regain sobriety and stability. Options could be re-evaluation, treatment alternatives, and/or relapse prevention coaching. Also, a relapse may result in a revision to your Monitoring Agreement. Time off from work is often desired so that you can put intensive efforts into your recovery program. Remember that a relapse is often the process that brings about a deeper commitment to life-long recovery.

Monitoring Costs

- TnPAP monitoring services are provided without cost to individuals who hold an active Tennessee license. Individuals who do not hold an active license (unlicensed, revoked, suspended status) will pay an annual monitoring fee until the license is in an active status. This fee, when appropriate, will be due on the Monitoring Agreement anniversary date.
- When you sign the Monitoring Agreement, you are agreeing to comply with all aspects of monitoring and you are responsible for the costs of all treatment, therapy, support group, toxicology testing, etc. This is a responsibility which requires financial planning. You may want to check with your insurance provider and see which, if any, services are included in your policy.

Noncompliance

You will receive advocacy and support from TnPAP as long as you comply with the procedures and conditions of your Monitoring Agreement. If you become noncompliant with your Agreement and do not accept the direction of TnPAP staff to re-establish compliance, you will lose advocacy and you will be discharged from the program.

If this occurs, a report summarizing your involvement with TnPAP and your noncompliance which led to your file closure will be prepared and sent to the Tennessee Department of Health, Division of Health Related Boards, Office of Investigations. This office will review the information to determine what steps to take, if any, to ensure the safety of the public.

Completion

You are eligible for completion of your monitoring period by the end date of the Agreement. However, if you are not progressing with the recovery process the monitoring period end date may be extended and completion delayed.

The process to successfully complete TnPAP includes the following:

- Contact TnPAP two weeks prior to your completion date to ensure that you are in compliance with all aspects of the Agreement and that all reports and drug screens have been received to date.
- Request written support for your completion from the individuals who are involved in your recovery (e.g., group facilitator, therapist/counselor, employer, sponsor, etc.).
- Submit the above documentation no sooner than two weeks prior to your Monitoring Agreement completion date.

Your TnPAP case manager will review your file and prepare the completion letter effective on the Monitoring Agreement completion date. You will be informed when you will no longer need to check in for random toxicology screening. It is recommended that you keep the completion letter (last addition to the folder or notebook) in a safe place for future evidence of your successful completion. You may also want to provide a copy of the letter to your employer, therapist, group facilitator, etc.

Tip: Expiration of the monitoring agreement time period does not always equal successful completion.

Discharge prior to Completion

Discharge prior to completion usually occurs for one of the following reasons:

- Habitual noncompliance with any aspect of the monitoring agreement requirements.
- Deemed to not be progressing satisfactorily in recovery.
- Not residing and licensed in the state of Tennessee.
- No longer residing and working within the state of Tennessee.
- No longer "willing" or "able" to comply with monitoring agreement stipulates.

Whenever a discharge occurs for any reason except successful completion TnPAP may be obligated to notify the Tennessee Department of Health, Division of Health Related Boards, Office of Investigation, of the discharge.